

Page 8, line 17 please insert

--DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT--.

Page 12, line 14 please insert --Accordingly, while only one embodiment of the present invention has been shown and described, it is obvious that many changes and modifications may be made thereunto without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.--.

Page 7, line 1 please delete "CLAIMS" and insert

--WHAT IS CLAIMED IS--.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-5 and add the following new claims

6-11:

--6. A process for decorating artifacts, utilizing the technique of transfer of monochrome or polychrome patterns reproduced on a transfer support, by means of the combined action of pressure and temperature, comprising the following steps:

a) wrapping up by tightly-covering the artifact to be decorated with a sublimable color transfer support, said transfer support comprising a supporting base of gas-tight thermoformable plastic material; and the pattern or

decoration to be transferred onto the artifact to be decorated being carried on said supporting base;

b) creating a vacuum between the artifact and said support, causing said transfer support to uniformly adhere to the surface of the artifact to be decorated;

c) heating the treated artifact to temperatures of about 200-230°C, for 30 seconds to 30 minutes, to transfer and polymerize final colors from said transfer support to the artifact; and

d) removing, after cooling the artifact, said supporting base from the artifact surface.

7. The process according to claim 6, further comprising, prior to wrapping the artifact, preparing the surface of the artifact to be decorated by cleaning the surface; and conducting preliminary painting cycles to avoid diffusion with the colors of the transfer support.

8. The process according to claim 6, wherein said supporting base of gas-tight thermoformable plastic material is polyvinyl alcohol.

9. The process according to claim 6, further comprising after said step of creating a vacuum, subjecting the artifact to a first intermediate heating process to a temperature at which thermoforming occurs, with a deformation and permanent adhesion of said transfer support on the surface of the artifact.

10. The process according to claim 6, wherein said transfer support is a sheet applied to the surface of the artifact, wherein said transfer sheet is placed on a suitable work bench through which a vacuum is obtained.

11. An apparatus for decorating artifacts utilizing the technique of the transfer of monochrome or polychrome patterns reproduced on a transfer support, by means of the combined action of pressure and temperature, comprising:

- a) a work bench for placing the artifact to be decorated during pre-treatment and wrapping of the artifact in a sublimable color transfer support, said transfer support comprising a supporting base of gas-tight thermoformable plastic material;
- b) a device for creating a vacuum between said transfer support and the artifact so that said transfer support adheres to the artifact; and